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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/734,665	12/13/2000	Dennis Mraz	18155.0006	4678

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EXAMINER

KRECK, JOHN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3673

DATE MAILED: 03/05/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/734,665

Applicant(s)

MRAZ, DENNIS

Examiner

John Kreck

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 December 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20,23 and 26-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17-20,23 and 26-40 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16,41-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

The supplemental amendment (which replaced the amendment dated 11/20/02) dated 12/5/02 has been entered.

Claims 1-20, 23, and 26-44 are pending.

Election/Restrictions

In response to the amendment and applicant's remarks filed 12/05/02, the restriction requirement of 10/22/02 has been withdrawn. The restriction requirement of 1/29/02 is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL, thus claims 17-20, 23, and 26-40 remain withdrawn from consideration. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 6.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 1-13, 15, 16, and 41-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Walker (U.S. Patent number 3,963,080).

Walker teaches the method of advancing a mining machine comprising the steps of bracing the advancing machine independently of the mining machine by a first set of braces (including 41, 42, 82, and 87) fixedly mounted on the advancing machine;

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moving the mining machine away from the advancing machine; bracing the mining machine independently of the advancing machine by a second set of braces (including 57, 22, and 23) fixedly mounted on the mining machine; releasing the advancing machine; and moving the advancing machine as called for in claim 1.

Walker also teaches bracing between roof and floor as called for in claim 2.

Walker also teaches bracing between side walls as called for in claim 3.

Walker also teaches the extender and the bracing independently of the extender as called for in claim 41.

Regarding independent claim 4:

Walker teaches the method of steering a mining machine comprising the steps of bracing the advancing machine between side walls; moving the mining machine away from the advancing machine; and increasing a distance between the advancing and mining machines by different amounts on two sides as called for in claim 4.

Walker also teaches bracing between roof and floor as called for in claim 5.

Walker also teaches bracing between walls as called for in claim 6.

Walker also teaches the extender and the bracing independently of the extender as called for in claim 42.

Regarding independent claim 7:

Walker teaches the method of retrieving a mining machine comprising the steps of bracing the advancing machine independently of the mining machine by a first set of

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braces (including 41, 42, 82, and 87) fixedly mounted on the advancing machine; moving the mining machine towards from the advancing machine; bracing the mining machine independently of the advancing machine by a second set of braces (including 57, 22, and 23) fixedly mounted on the mining machine; releasing the advancing machine; and moving the advancing machine as called for in claim 7.

Walker also teaches bracing between roof and floor as called for in claim 8.

Walker also teaches bracing between walls as called for in claim 9.

Walker also teaches the extender and the bracing independently of the extender as called for in claim 43.

Regarding independent claim 10:

Walker shows an apparatus for advancing and steering a mining machine including an advancing machine (generally between 75 and 38, as shown in figure 4); an extender (31, 32); and a brace (including 82 and 87—side walls or alternately 41 and 42—roof and floor) as called for in claim 10.

Walker also shows a second extender (74,75) as called for in claim 11.

Walker also teaches the hydraulic cylinder as called for in claim 12.

Walker also teaches the hydraulic cylinder as called for in claim 13.

Walker also teaches the brace between roof and floor (41,42) as called for in claim 15.

Walker also teaches the brace between walls (82,87) as called for in claim 16.

Walker also teaches the fixedly mounted as called for in claim 44.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Weimer (U.S. Patent number 4,192,551).

The Walker reference teaches all off the limitations of claim 10, from which claim 14 depends. The Walker reference fails to teach the extender comprising electrical actuators. It is well known in the mining industry to use electrical actuators (such as valves) with similar hydraulic extenders. This is done in order to allow the machine to be remote controlled, for instance, as shown by Weimer (see figure 3). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified the Walker device to have included electrical actuators, as called for in claim 14, and as taught by Weimer, in order to allow the device to be remotely controlled.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

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3. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

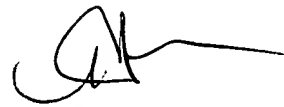
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Kreck whose telephone number is (703)308-2725. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:00 am - 3:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Shackelford can be reached on (703)308-2978. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)305-3597 for regular communications and (703)305-7687 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)306-4177.

JJK
February 24, 2003



**HEATHER SHACKELFORD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600**